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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

Select Committee on
Energy Independence and Global Warming
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
CHAIRMAN

June 8, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

From May 26-28 Secretary of Energy Steven Chu attended the St. James's Palace Nobel Laureate Symposium in London. Once again Dr. Chu made public statements that appear to be at odds with the United States stated position in the international climate change negotiations as articulated by Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern. These statements threaten to undermine a global agreement at the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen, Denmark.

At the conclusion of the event, participants agreed to "The St James Palace Memorandum 'Action for a Low Carbon and Equitable Future.'" Among other things, the Memorandum states that "[t]he global agreement in Copenhagen must include" that "we should confine the temperature rise to 2 degrees," which "can only be achieved with a peak of global emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2015" and "means that developed countries have to aim for a 25-40% reduction by 2020." The "25-40% reduction by 2020" figure is one that has been promoted heavily by China and other developing countries in the ongoing international climate change negotiations.

Secretary Chu conceded in a subsequent press release issued on May 28, 2009 that it was "not appropriate as a government official to join a private petition intended to influence governments." Nonetheless, he stated that "[t]oday's Declaration by the Nobel Laureates reflects the consensus of scientists" and "I'm a scientist." The net result is that Dr. Chu endorsed the memorandum, although he did not actually sign it.

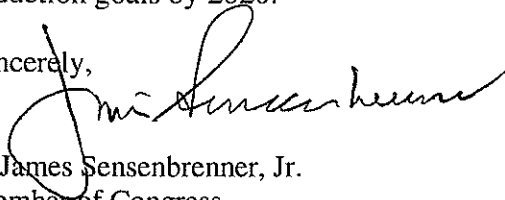
Secretary Chu is a high ranking government official and the position he endorsed is contrary to remarks by Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern. At the U.S. Climate Action Symposium on March 3, 2009, Stern stated that "[s]ome assert that the United States can only meet its responsibility if it agrees to reduce emissions 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020," but such a "requirement for the United States would garner very little support here" and "insisting on a 25-40% cut below 1990 for the United States is a prescription not for progress but for stalemate."¹

¹<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2009/119983.htm>.

I've already sent separate letters to Secretary Chu and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asking for clarification on additional statements that Mr. Chu made to the press. According to *Bloomberg*, Secretary Chu said that the U.S. "may accept targets for reducing its greenhouse gases in an international treaty even if China doesn't" and that "one hopes that in several years China will follow." This statement stands in contrast to statements Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern made recently to the Senate, where he said it was "imperative to negotiate a strong new international agreement that will include significant commitments from all countries" and that "need to ensure that the agreement is truly global and includes significant actions by all major economies" for "[t]he simple math of accumulating emissions shows that there is no other way to make the kinds of reductions that science indicates are necessary."

I request clarification on who leads the Administration's international climate change negotiations—the U.S. Department of State and Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern, or Secretary of Energy Chu—as well as on the Administration's position regarding reduction goals by 2020.

Sincerely,



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.

Member of Congress

Ranking Republican Member, Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming

cc: The Honorable Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy
The Honorable Carol Browner, Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change
The Honorable Hilary Clinton, Secretary of State
The Honorable Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change